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Letter dated 21 February 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 20 February 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tuley TANÇ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Letter dated 20 February 1997 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 28 January 1997 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations in connection with the Joint Declaration between President Rauf Denktaş and President Süleyman Demirel of Turkey issued at Ankara on 20 January 1997 (A/51/787-S/1997/85).

In the first instance, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot representative that Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are two sovereign countries which formally recognize each other and, as such, any interference with this reciprocal relationship is unwarranted and ultra vires.

Secondly, I wish further to remind the Greek Cypriot representative, who pays lip service to international law, that had his administration had the slightest respect for the rule of law, it would not claim to be the legitimate Government of Cyprus, since, under the 1960 international treaties relating to Cyprus, the legitimacy of government has to be vested in the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot peoples "acting conjointly and in partnership". Furthermore, in making charges to the effect that the said Declaration entails "threats" against his side, the Greek Cypriot representative conveniently forgets that the Declaration was issued in the wake of, and in response to, the Greek Cypriot side's procurement of the S-300 missile system from the Russian Federation, in contravention of the latest Security Council resolution on Cyprus, namely resolution 1092 (1996) of 23 December 1996, in which the Security Council, among other things expresses grave concern over the introduction of sophisticated weaponry into the military arsenal on the island. The Joint Declaration issued by the Presidents of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey, far from being a threat to anyone, is aimed at safeguarding against the grave threat posed to the stability of the island and the region at large by the introduction of such weaponry and the unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces by the Greek Cypriot side.

Recent history, as much as the current developments, bears witness to the fact that it was always the Greek Cypriot side, acting in collaboration with Greece, which not only directed and continues to direct threats against its former partners, the Turkish Cypriots, but which actually carried them out in the form of a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Turkish Cypriot people between 1963 and 1974. The actions and statements of the Greek Cypriot leadership today, to the effect that they will "liberate" the North from the Turks and that they will hoist the Greek flag over all of Northern Cyprus, clearly demonstrate from whom the real threat to peace and stability on the island comes. Hence we see the repeated violations of the buffer zone and our borders and the military build-up by the Greek Cypriot side, including the purchase of the S-300 missile system.

As for the barrage of accusations pouring out of the Greek Cypriot side to the effect that the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey do not respect United

Nations resolutions, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot side that the main thrust of all relevant United Nations resolutions is the solution of the Cyprus question through negotiations between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sides on an equal footing, within the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General. It is precisely those negotiations that the Greek Cypriot side is avoiding because it lacks the political will to settle the issue on a viable and just basis and prefers to cling to its title as the so-called "Government of Cyprus". As is well-known, the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Clerides, has repeatedly rejected the calls made by President Denktaş for face-to-face talks on the pretext that there is "no common ground". Even this fact, namely, the refusal of the Greek Cypriot side to sit at the negotiating table, demonstrates who is interested in resolving the issue through peaceful negotiation and who is seeking confrontation by escalating tensions.

The very magnitude of the rearmament campaign of the Greek Cypriot side and its determination to purchase the said missiles in spite of widespread criticism against it indicate the aggressive nature of the so-called "joint defence doctrine". The speedy implementation of this doctrine is a clear sign that the joint Greek-Greek Cypriot front will not heed the calls for abandoning its policy of escalation, to the detriment of the negotiating process and the pacific resolution of the Cyprus dispute.

In recognition of this new major impediment placed before your mission of good offices in respect of Cyprus, I trust that you will use your influence to convince the Greek Cypriot side to abandon this policy of confrontation and come to the negotiating table without further delay.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus